

Easter Traditions in Eastern Europe

Smingus Dyngus
(Wet Monday)



Presentation developed for the Center for Slavic and East European Studies at The Ohio State University by Kathryn Metz

What are American Easter traditions?

- Painted eggs
- Easter bunny
- Religious aspects of holiday
 - Resurrection of Jesus Christ
 - Lent
 - Good Friday
- Foods eaten:
 - Ham, eggs, chocolate
- Celebrate Easter on Sunday
- Do you have any other traditions?



Eastern European Easter Traditions

- Do you think Eastern Europeans dye their eggs?
 - Yes!
- What foods do you think they eat?
 - Ham, lamb, horseradish, sweet bread (Kalacs)
- Do you think they go to church?
- Any other ideas how they celebrate?



Ukrainian Easter Eggs

- *Pysanka* eggs – beeswax used to intricately design eggs



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXy8tNvQ7uA>

Egg Tapping in Bulgaria

- Adults and children take an egg and tap them against each other
- Whoever's egg doesn't crack is the winner and will have the best health that year
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmhsnAlysXM>



Czechia and Slovakia

- Men spank or whip the women on Easter Monday
- Whip is made of 8, 12, or even 24 willow rods and decorated with colorful ribbons
- A legend says that women should be spanked with a whip in order to keep their health, beauty and fertility during the whole next year
- Women who do not get visited by the men are offended
- Women then give the men eggs and invite them inside for a drink



Smingus -- Dyngus

- “Wet Monday”
- Celebrated mainly in Poland and Ukraine
- Boys through buckets of waters on girls and spank them with a willow rod
- Sometimes the boys soak the girls while they are still in bed
- Occasionally, the girls are dragged to the river and thrown in
- Girls soak the boys on Easter Tuesday
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqqYvQlcWG8>



“Sprinkling” in Hungary

- On Easter Monday, boys visit all their female friends and family and sprinkle them
- Men sprinkle women with perfume and cologne instead of water
- They believe that water has a healing effect and will enhance fertility
- Women must give money or food to the men after they get sprinkled

Thoughts?

- Do you wish we would incorporate any of these practices into the American Easter traditions?